Leader of the Pack: Preparing Small Group Leaders Virtually for In-Person Learning Activities

Dina Kurzweil, PhD
Karen (Beth) Marcellas, PhD
Linda Macaulay, EdD
Disclosures

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Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

● Identify types of learning experiences where small group, in-person instruction is essential

● Map elements of the small group learning experience to teaching points that small group leaders need to know

● Identify appropriate online instructional techniques to use when preparing small group leaders to lead effective in-person small-group learning experiences
The Path

- Identify key elements of small group learning
- Discuss logistics of finding/preparing small group leaders
- Explore different ways to present content to small group leaders online.
What Will Faculty Be Teaching? - The Student Learning Experience

What are some situations where in-person, small group instruction might be essential?
What Will Faculty Be Teaching? - The Student Learning Experience

In-person works well for:\(^1\)

- Learning about/in a specific environment
- Developing interpersonal skills
- Developing hands-on skills

\(^1\)Rogers-Estable et al, 2015
What Will Faculty Be Teaching? - The Student Learning Experience

Small Group works well for:¹, ²

- Fostering student engagement
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Developing communication skills
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Collaborating on solutions

¹Eberly Center for Teaching & Learning (n.d.),
²University of New South Wales, Sydney (2018).
Example: Antietam Medical Staff Walk

Objective of instructional activity (FOR STUDENTS)

- Identify ways that terrain and other tactical considerations affect the practice of military medicine on a battlefield.

Goals for FACULTY

- Introduce students to key concepts of tactical analysis.
- Assist students in seeing the engagement as the participants saw it.
Food for Thought

What are some key elements of a course that you are working on that might benefit from in-person small groups and would need a large number of faculty/facilitators?
Small Group Leader Preparation - The Logistics

Consider the small group leaders

- Recruitment
- Motivation of instructors
- Time available for preparation
Small Group Leader Preparation - The Material

● Expertise of instructors
  ○ Skills
    ■ Teaching skills
    ■ Skills in content area
  ○ Knowledge/Information
    ■ Knowledge of content area
Example: Antietam Medical Staff Walk
- **En Route to Smoketown Road**

Before the Antietam Medical Staff Walk, you should be able to present the information on this page to the students and discuss it at the appropriate time. This section of the Walk focuses on the following topics:

- METT-TC
- OAKOC
- Positioning of physicians and aid posts
- Difficulty of locating patients
- Logistics / resupply

As you enter the Cornfield on the walking trail, introduce yourself to your students if you have not done so already and encourage conversation and introductions within the group. You should also take this opportunity to discuss safety, especially road safety, and the importance of hydration.

As you move from the first stop to the second stop you should hold into the students that are at the medical staff.
This section provides printable PDFs of much of the content found in the site.

**Antietam Map** (PDF)

**METT-TC & OAKOC Analysis** (PDF)

**Terrain Analysis** (PDF)

**GSN/EMDP2 Talking Points** (PDF)

**SOM Talking Points** (PDF)

**Antietam Brochure** (PDF)
Example: Antietam Medical Staff Walk

Terrain Analysis

Terrain is assessed by looking at 5 main criteria:

1. Artificial and natural obstacles
   - Obstacles are meant to slow, stop or shape
     - Artificial obstacles are man-made obstacles such as minefields, anti-tank trenches, barbed wire obstacles, craters etc.
     - Natural obstacles are things such as gullies, ravines, rivers, lakes, marches
   - Questions:
     - Where and how will natural obstacles and terrain affect mobility and/or maneuver?
     - Where and how will artificial obstacles provide the best effect?
     - Where is it best to circumvent or breach the obstacle?

2. Avenues of approach
   - An avenue of approach is a ground corridor that leads to the target, fighting position or important terrain
   - Questions:
     - What are the advantages and disadvantages of each selected avenue of approach?
     - What size unit can be maneuvered?
     - What are likely counter-attack areas?
     - Prioritize avenues of approach
Food for Thought

Think about a course that might need facilitators for small groups.

- What skills do group leaders need?
- What is some of the information they might need to know?
- How do those people currently get trained?
  - Can you expand the pool by providing good training?
Techniques for Preparing Small Group Instructors

- Align techniques to needs and objectives
  - Information
    - Direct instruction
  - Skills
    - Demonstrations
    - Practice sessions
  - Critical thinking
    - Problem-solving / case-based sessions
Align Tools to Techniques and Context

- Consider synchronous vs asynchronous
- Consider time and resources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Critical thinking</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>- Text</td>
<td>- Text -based cases/problems</td>
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<td>- Lecture/Meeting*</td>
<td>- Online/interactive texts/problems</td>
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<td>- Lab kit</td>
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<td>- Interactive tool</td>
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* can be synchronous or asynchronous
Discussion

- What are some benefits and drawbacks you have found with different tools and techniques you have used to prepare small group instructors?
Case Example

Starting in fall 2022, your university is starting a multidisciplinary “campus-wide reading program” for which every incoming first year student must read the same book over the summer and get together in small in-person discussion groups with a faculty member during the student orientation period at the beginning of their first year.

How would you prepare the small group instructors for this assignment? Consider:

- How are you going to recruit small group leaders?
- What skills and information do small group leaders need to have?
- How can you prepare small group leaders for this assignment?
Questions??
References

Eberly Center for Teaching and Learning. (n.d.). What are the benefits of group work?. Design & Teach a Course. https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/benefits.html
